

Travel Photography

FOR
DUMMIES®

in a
day

Serge Timacheff

***Travel Photography
In A Day***
FOR
DUMMIES®

by Serge Timacheff



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Introduction

Okay, raise your hand if you *haven't* taken a camera with you on a trip somewhere . . . Just as I thought — only one person in the back row.

Traveling and photography go together as well as peanut butter and jam, or blankets and naptime. However, although nearly everyone takes a camera with them on their travels, using the camera correctly, taking advantage of all its capabilities, and shooting photos people actually want to look at make things a little more challenging!

Whether you have one of the new snazzy, feature-rich point-and-shoot cameras, a simple camera option on your smartphone, or a DSLR with interchangeable lenses, knowing how to use it to its best advantage no matter where you are in the world will make photography more fun and the results awesome. Even your Uncle Bernie won't fall asleep during your slideshow when you get home.

This book covers the basics of exposure, composition, and camera operation, and then provides an overview of many different types of places and subjects you're likely to encounter on travels anywhere from the next city over to the jungles of Borneo. I include some handy tips and tricks for various situations that are easy and quick to learn and remember, and a fast reference before you head out to your adventure.

You then discover how you can get your photos safely home and share them with your friends and family, using common storage options as well as the Internet. Rest assured, after reading this book, you'll know your options for creating lasting visual memories of your travels with your camera.

What You Can Do In A Day

As part of the *In A Day For Dummies* series, I designed this book to contain about a day's reading (or a couple days if you're taking your time). I focus on basic photography principles along with a variety of travel photography situations and scenarios, along with lots of example photos. With a little practice, you can significantly improve your travel photos, to the joy and relief of your family and friends!

Foolish Assumptions

I don't know what assumptions you've made about me at this point, but I can tell you a few things that I already assume about you:

- ✔ You know what a computer is. You can turn it on, and you understand that if you spill coffee on your keyboard, you'll have to run out and get a replacement.
- ✔ You have, or are about to get a digital camera on your smartphone, a point-and-shoot, or a dSLR.
- ✔ You have a familiarity with the web and are reasonably comfortable using basic services such as the Internet, web browsers, and simple online applications.

Icons Used in This Book

Icons emphasize a point to remember, a danger to be aware of, or information that I think you may find helpful. Those points are illustrated as such:



Tips are little bits of information that you may find useful.



I use this icon to point out dangerous situations.



All geeky stuff goes here. I don't use this icon very often, but when I do, you know you're about to encounter technical mumbo-jumbo.



When you see this icon, read the text next to it two or three times to brand it into your brain so that you remember whatever it was that I think you need to remember.



This icon directs you to the companion website for the book — www.dummies.com/inaday/travelphotography — where you can find photos and articles relating to travel photography.



Go online for a quick exercise or task to make your next trip and the photos you'll take a memorable one.

Chapter 1

Gearing Up for Your Travels

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In This Chapter

- ▶ Choosing a camera for travel
 - ▶ Gathering your accessories
 - ▶ Finding out what to expect on your journey
-

Finding the right camera to be your travel companion is the first step to taking great photos to share with your family and friends. But there are many other things to consider, such as selecting handy accessories, knowing how to keep your gear safe, and familiarizing yourself with what to expect when you're abroad.

This chapter covers smartphone, point-and-shoot, and dSLR cameras as well as the accoutrements they demand to make a great trip even more memorable.

Selecting the Right Camera for Travel

You have many great options to find the right digital camera equipment to take on the road. Today even some of the smallest cameras can capture remarkably good photos in a large-enough resolution to print and adorn your living room. And, although there are definite advantages and quality differences among all the myriad models from which to choose, first consider what kind of shooting you'll be doing and what you'll do with the photos you take. Deciding what equipment you want to use comes down to a few key factors:

- ✓ Are you just taking snapshots, or do you intend to enter photo contests and put your photos on display?
- ✓ Are you going to travel where weather and other outdoor conditions could affect your camera?
- ✓ Do you mind devoting extra space to carrying a camera and gear?
- ✓ What's your budget?

These factors may drive your decision toward the camera(s) you purchase and use, and help you overcome that helpless feeling you get when you enter a camera or electronics store and find yourself staring at a sea of products.

Prolific shutterbugs often use several types of cameras on a trip, depending on the situation and the type of photos they're shooting. In the upcoming sections, I look at the three main digital camera groups and then apply the preceding factors to them so that you can determine what best suits your travel photography needs.

Smartphones

What teenager today hasn't taken photos and then instantly uploaded them to Facebook? *Smartphones* are cellphones that can capture decent snapshot-type photos, store them internally or externally on a memory card, and display them on its large LCD screen. One example is the HTC Incredible S, as shown in Figure 1-1, which has a camera and a large screen for viewing images. The camera lens doubles as a front-facing camera. (I also consider photos you can take with a tablet, such as the Apple iPad or the Samsung Galaxy Tab, in this category of cameras.) Even if the phone's cell service is turned off (for example, when you're on an airplane or in a foreign country), you can still use the camera and save images. They are very handy, but short on true photographic capabilities and features.



If you need some help posting your photos on Facebook, take a look at the article "Posting Photo Albums on Facebook!" at www.dummies.com/inaday/travelphotography.



Photo courtesy of the HTC Corporation

Figure 1-1: The HTC Incredible S.

With a large LCD screen but a small form factor, the smartphone camera is very convenient and a great choice for snapping quick photos of friends and places as long as the light is reasonably good. There's usually a minimal flash capability, but other camera control features are very limited. Uploading photos directly to Facebook or Twitter and e-mailing or texting images are easy, convenient ways to share your pictures. Compared with dSLRs and even point-and-shoot models, smartphone photos are smaller in size with less quality because of fewer megapixels, a very small image sensor, and a tiny lens. One thing to keep in mind is that smartphone batteries are notorious for draining quickly, and using the camera only makes this worse.

Comparing a smartphone to a point-and-shoot or dSLR is a bit of an apples-and-oranges exercise because the smartphone is, well, a phone and not just a camera. However, generally speaking, you get a lot of camera features, plus the ability to link directly to Facebook, Twitter, and the Web in general. As a device, they are reasonably hardy for most moderate conditions, but I wouldn't leave them out in the rain or snow — at least not for very long! From a purely simple, portable standpoint, however, they're exceptionally simple to carry around and are very easy to use.

Some new-generation phones, such as Apple's iPhone 4 and 4S, offer higher-megapixel images (up to 8 MP) and are

essentially capable of replacing the point-and-shoot camera in terms of both portability as well as quality. The new iPad offers greatly enhanced image quality as well; this trend will likely be echoed by most smartphone and tablet manufacturers in forthcoming products. As a result, the market will undoubtedly narrow for the point-and-shoot market, and many up-and-coming amateur photographers will probably migrate directly from the smartphone to the dSLR. If most of your photography is ending up on the Web in social media sites, this quality will more than satisfy your needs.

In addition, new gadgets are being developed all the time for smartphones. For example, there are even a few lenses (telephoto and wide-angle) you can now attach to the iPhone!

Point-and-shoot cameras

These small, moderately priced cameras (often under \$200) offer a variety of photography features, including preset camera exposures for specific scenarios, such as for sports, nighttime, portraits, and so on; more control over settings, such as ISO (image sensitivity) and shutter speed; and the ability to optically *zoom in and out* of a subject, meaning the lens actually shifts to bring a subject closer or to take a wider shot, respectively.

Point-and-shoots often have other snazzy features, including interesting presets, editing capabilities, and Wi-Fi — and some point-and-shoots are even waterproof. For example, the FUJIFILM FinePix XP170, as shown in Figure 1-2, is a versatile point-and-shoot with a large LCD viewing screen, lots of shooting mode options, full High Definition (HD) movie capability, a high ISO capability, and a 5x optical zoom lens. This camera is also water- freeze-, dust-, and shockproof and features a wireless image transfer capability.

However, point-and-shoot cameras have only one lens, so you're limited to whatever is permanently mounted on the camera. However, a few point-and-shoot models offer some additional lenses you can mount over the fixed lens.



Photo courtesy of the FUJIFILM North America Corporation

Figure 1-2: The FUJIFILM FinePix XP170.

A point-and-shoot camera is a step up from a smartphone but is still small enough to be handy. These cameras typically lack manual control features and instead offer a lot of preset exposure settings for various lighting and subject scenarios. They also often have interesting capabilities, such as smile or facial recognition, on-camera editing, and Wi-Fi support for Facebook. Point-and-shoots offer a somewhat better flash; a few have image stabilization; most have a larger image sensor and higher megapixel count; and some are even waterproof. Best of all, these cameras offer better quality overall lenses than what you get on a smartphone, and the ability to optically zoom means you have the same quality image whether you're taking a telephoto (far-away) or a close-up photo (an *optical* zoom is better quality than a *digital* zoom, which only crops your photo).

The following are some alternatives to a standard point-and-shoot camera: